extended

The magazine of the OS/2 community

Phoenix
OS/2
Society

attributes

keyphrases

In this issue

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extended attributes

comment
Electronic shackles

by Bill Schindler, Editor-in-chief

According to our surveys (August 1998 *extended attributes*), about half of Society members work in the computer industry. I suspect that an additional large percent are connected to the knowledge industry in some way.

Which means that the majority of the membership may have a problem.

The loss of leisure time

When the Industrial Age was ushered in, it brought with it a slow increase in leisure time. When I was growing up in the '60s, there were predictions that we'd be down to a 30 hour work week by the turn of the century. In the early '80s, I had friends who worked 35 hour weeks. It looked like the prediction would come true in another 20 years.

Instead, the Computer Age reversed the trend. It's now common to see computer professionals working 50 to 60 hour weeks. Even professionals in other fields work more and more hours every week.

Worse still, it's become impossible to accurately quantify how many hours a week many of us put in. With cell phones, notebook computers, pagers, home offices, email, and faxes, you can be—and probably are—on the job even when you're not at the job.

How often do you watch someone answer the phone or check a work-related page while he's in a restaurant. How often to you do it yourself?

Why it's happening

But why is all this automation adding to our work loads? Well, because the computer has caused a geometric proliferation of data.

Computers are very good at storing, transferring, manipulating, and presenting data. But humans are required to understand the data, to rate its importance, to respond to it, and, yes, to create more data.

Humans are the key piece in the Age of Data, and humans are a limited resource. Thus, the only way to keep up with the proliferation of data is to work more and more hours.

There's no cure for it, other than to learn to work smarter, which is more crutch than cure. Maybe if someone finally invents a real artificial intelligence, we'll be able to pass some of the workload off. But until then....

Take some time off every so often. Leave the notebook, the cell phone, and the rest of the electronic shackles behind and spend some time just smelling the flowers or watching the sun set. ◖

Phoenix OS/2 Society, Inc

Certifiable

by Esther Schindler

Esther Schindler is program chair of the Phoenix OS/2 Society. In real life, she's Technology Editor for ZD's *Sm@rt Reseller* magazine. You can reach her at esther@bitranch.com.

OS/2 users have an impressive ability to find good news, even when none exists. I wish I had a dollar for every time someone suggested that perhaps IBM's marketing attitudes are intentional, and "they're just giving Microsoft enough rope to hang themselves with Windows NT."

I very much wish that were true. Unfortunately, I keep finding evidence that IBM is doing its best to starve OS/2, all the while claiming that it's not killing the OS. It's as if the attitude is, "We're not killing our child—how could you say that? We're just not feeding it anymore."

Passing us by

IBM rolled out BESTeam, its program for resellers and consultants, at the first OS/2 World Conference in San Francisco. At the same (1995?) conference, IBM offered free OS/2 certification with a "beta" version of the tests. They were free, so—being no fool—I signed up for both.

I decided to take the certification tests (with no preparation) until I flunked one. To my surprise, I passed all of the tests they had, though my scores reminded me of my mother's rhetorical question, "Do you know what they call the person who graduates last in his medical school class? Doctor!"

Our company became member #165 in BESTeam, happily accepting the box of software and marketing materials on how to sell OS/2, Lotus Notes, and other IBM products. That was three years ago.

I got a phone call from IBM's BESTeam relations, the other day. The voice on the phone was bright and perky. "We have you listed as a Certified OS/2 Engineer for OS/2 version 2.1," she said. "That expires in February, and if you don't get a new certification, The Groovy Corporation will lose its premier membership status in BESTeam."

I'm judged nowadays for the knowledge that I can demonstrate, not my certificates, but I thought that Bill (who still runs Groovy and is available for consulting at outrageous but always-fair rates) might consider getting formal certifica-

tion. So I asked if writing OS/2 books "counted" as certification. That was a good way to confuse the poor, well-intentioned support person, who took a little while to recognize that "write the book" really meant *write the book*. In her encouragement to get us to sign up for certification, she pointed out that BESTeam has a "you pass, we pay" policy for technical classes (irrelevant, I told her) and a "you pass (the test), we reimburse you" for certification tests.

Ah! That sounded more interesting. I asked the IBMer to send me the relevant information. The next day, I got an apologetic note saying that she'd been wrong—OS/2 isn't covered in the "you pass, we pay" program. It hadn't received funding for it. According to the IBM Web site, however, I've since learned we can be reimbursed for training and certification in Windows NT solutions, VisualAge for Java, or Net.Commerce (an IBM product unavailable for OS/2), plus two or three other products, like MQSeries, suitable for larger businesses.

Oh, did I mention VisualAge for Java?

Mo hotta, no beta

Apparently, the newsgroups had some discussion about beta testing for the new version of IBM's VisualAge for Java, expected to ship in September. I didn't see the original discussion, but in a Warpcast message, a member of the IBM beta test team explained why IBM would be testing the software only under Windows.

The IBMer wrote, "No, we have not planned an OS/2 beta for Version 2, and this is not at all due to 'IBM's abandoning of OS/2!' I will explain the rationale behind this decision.

"The development effort is channeled towards delivering the final product right now, which everybody is waiting for. Offering a beta is an activity that requires quite some effort, and given the tight schedule, we are only able to offer one flavor of the beta, and Windows

was chosen simply because the majority of the customers that we have are using that platform. We simply cannot offer a beta for all the platforms and national languages that the VisualAge for Java final product will be offered on!

"However, the final product will be delivered at the same time on both platforms, and will offer the same level of functionality on both platforms. With my apologies, I hope that you can see on a Windows box, for now, what you will get on OS/2 very soon."

I found this curious behavior on the part of IBM.

In my sordid past, I spent a few years optimizing and testing compilers. I wrote plenty of other software, as well, and I'm married to a software developer. So I know that *bugs happen where you don't test*. If you don't exercise the code, you don't find its flaws. The entire purpose of a beta test is to get real live breathing users to exercise the code, to find those defects so that you can fix them. (The fact that, in the last few years, beta tests have become part of the early marketing process, doesn't obviate this essential goal.)

I do understand that beta cycles are expensive, time consuming, and occur when everyone is sick of the project and just wants to ship the damn thing already—especially if Marketing is breathing down your neck. But the reasoning IBM offered for *not* testing on OS/2 is simply terrible, and I don't buy it.

O Windows is a reference platform for Java. If the code will work anywhere, it will work on Windows. Testing *only* on Windows won't give IBM the opportunity to test one of the important tenets of Java: Write once, Run everywhere. Despite that goal, every software developer is entreated to test her application on *every* Java platform—yet IBM isn't doing so with the tool they expect others to rely on?!

(And please don't tell me that IBM doesn't need to test such things. One screen shot in the *Domino Go Webserver Frontrunner*, a book for

which I was lead author and to which Bill contributed [Coriolis Books, 1997], shows that Java *doesn't* work the same across platforms—even in IBM/Lotus' own tools. In that instance, a Java-based Web site report has incorrect scroll bar spacing when run on OS/2, making it unusable. As far as I know, this has never been fixed.)

O Whenever I speak with the IBM folks in regard to OS/2 and its support, they tell me about "transitioning" the OS/2 customers to Java and network computing. Yet IBM isn't even planning to test the latest version of the tool the customer are supposed to depend on, to make sure that the "transition" actually *works?*

Nonetheless, I might be willing to give IBM the benefit of the doubt—except that IBM's languages group clearly has something else going on.

Despite promises made for Windows-parity at ColoradOS/2 in October 1996, there hasn't been a release of Visual Age C++ for OS/2 in almost three years.

The OS/2 version is at 3.0, and Windows is at 3.5.

I had a conversation with an IBM employee about this a few weeks ago. The Languages group had told the IBMer that Visual Age C++ version 3.6 has both Windows and OS/2 on the same CD. That would be dandy, except that there's no mention, anyplace, of a version 3.6 in existence. Did IBM forget to announce the software, even internally?

I queried IBM about this matter, using awfully similar words. (Isn't copy and paste wonderful?) I'm told that version 3.6 of VisualAge C++ is available for AIX, and they didn't know what else I was talking about. The response to my query regarding VisualAge for Java testing was as follows:

"The fact is that most of our customers use Windows, due to time constraints we could only support releasing a beta on one platform but for GA we will release simultaneous Windows and OS/2 (in the same box) and will ensure top quality for both OS/2 and Windows."

As the savvy reader will note, the IBM respondent didn't address a single issue I raised. He just reworded the original message.

How can IBM ensure top quality for OS/2 when they don't even test it "in the wild?"

My request to "try again, and this time please address the questions" hadn't been answered by press time.

With friends like these...

Perhaps I could have written about these incidents in the general computing press. But if I did, I'd accumulate another batch of nastygram email accusing me of taking money from Microsoft to badmouth IBM. It grows wearisome, because such people don't understand that the press' job is to find inconsistencies in what a vendor says, and what a vendor does. And, in regard to OS/2, IBM provides entirely too many opportunities. Most of the media is convinced that OS/2 is a non-issue, and the only interesting article might be if IBM actually *admitted* they were trying to kill the OS.

With behavior like I report above, who can blame the press for thinking that OS/2 no longer matters? Ⓠ

.press release

Oz. of Prevention for OS/2 CMMS system available

Aviar released the Oz. of Prevention System for IBM OS/2 and Work-Space on Demand platforms. Oz is the first fully voice-activated and speech-driven CMMS (Computerized Maintenance Management System) available. This new product has all of the capabilities of Aviar's award-winning DOS CMMS, OOPS! The Ounce of Prevention System, which runs under OS/2, but Aviar tapped into the wealth of cutting-edge technology available through the OS/2 operating system

to make this package "software for the next millenium."

Oz, under development for almost three years, was written in Object REXX, uses IBM DB2, and was designed specifically to utilize OS/2's built-in speech recognition. "Oz. is quality software, built with quality tools, for a quality operating system. Businesses of all sizes need software which is reliable, stable, powerful, flexible, convenient and ready for real-life mission-critical application. We believe Oz. fills that need in the CMMS area," says John J. Urbaniak, Ph.D., president and founder of Aviar. "Since Oz is fully customizable and fully internation-

alizable, it can be used anywhere maintenance is performed to help companies, large and small, track labor, parts, costs, equipment history, downtime, and more."

The software is sold as a turnkey system directly through Aviar's Sales Department.

More information about Oz is at Aviar's Web site, www.oops-web .com. Ⓠ

A Warped look at Windows NT

two warped

By David Both

This month I continue my discussion of Windows NT from the viewpoint of a long time OS/2 Warp user. Last time, I mentioned that what impressed me most about Windows NT was the overall level of integration with its own utilities, as well as the applications available for Windows NT from Microsoft. The impression I am left with, however, is not good.

Disclaimer: This is not a review of Windows NT, nor a bash of it. I am merely relating my first experiences with the operating system.

Blue screen of death

Like anyone who has used Windows NT for more than a few hours, I have experienced the "blue screen of death." This fate strikes me as only slightly better than sitting on a nest of fire ants for two hours. If you're from the south, you'll understand the pain involved in such a proposition.

The blue screen of death, or BSOD, is somewhat akin to an OS/2 IPE, Internal Processing Error. It is a kernel level fault; the system has stopped. I encountered the problem running Windows NT Workstation 4.0 with Service Pack 3 installed, which is supposed to fix many of the problems which can cause the BSOD.

At any rate, I was just minding my own business when the BSOD appeared. I had made some changes earlier in the day, but had successfully rebooted several times since then. "Ahhh," I said to myself, "now I can try the NT recovery options."

Unfortunately, Windows NT does not provide nearly the same recovery options as are available with Warp. In fact, I cannot find any recovery options which actually work as advertised.

Even though I'd made the strongly recommended recovery disk, I was unable to recover from this disaster. Choosing the "Last known good profile" did not allow me to recover. And there is no way to actually boot to a set of Windows NT diskettes to try to recover.

I have come to truly appreciate the "Recovery Options" menu that we can get to during boot by pressing Alt-F1. The options that OS/2 users have at that point far surpass the pitiful recovery options available to NT users.

I found the most common recovery available to an NT user when the system crashes is to reinstall. A clean install is best. Reformat the C: drive to get rid of everything, and hope you had a recent backup of your critical data files.

Windows NT has options to install over an existing version, or to install a new version without deleting the current (damaged) version. Neither of those options were as efficacious in producing a complete and total recovery to good operating condition as was just gutting everything and starting over from scratch.

Installing NT on D: drive

According to Microsoft's documentation, it's possible to install NT on a drive other than C:. I did try this, with the immediate result of apparent success. Unfortunately, this success was not long-lived. After a few days of very strange happenings, the system crashed irretrievably. I was left to recover my data and reinstall once again—or thrice again, as it turned out.

I have since discovered that, although the documentation says that it can be accomplished, installing NT on anything but the C: drive is a dangerous proposition. Most of my hacker friends tell me that Windows NT is best installed on the C: drive. Use of other drives is also discouraged for applications, although data can be located on any drive that an application can be configured to use.

Application integration

Once NT and some basic applications are installed, things get even more interesting. All Microsoft applications are tightly integrated into NT—*very* tightly. Almost all major Microsoft applications work best when installed on the C: drive, along with the operating system. The primary reason for this is that the registry is on C: and almost all applications make entries into the registry. In addition, your "Personal" folder is on the C: drive where many applications store data by default, or in a Personal subdirectory.

I use two primary applications under Windows NT: Outlook '98 and Office. Outlook is a PIM and e-mail application with a high degree of integration between the PIM and the e-mail functions. For example, you can drag a message to the calendar and create an calendar entry. In fact, a meeting scheduler generates the meeting entry on your calendar and sends an e-mail to the other prospective participants. When they have read the e-mail, they can respond by accepting or rejecting

TABLE 1. **OS/2 Warp timestamp handling**

File attribute	Value of original file when created	Value of original file after copy operation	Value on copy
Created	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM
Last Modified	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM
Last Accessed	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	07/21/98 09:46:31 AM	07/21/98 09:46:31 AM

the meeting appointment. If they accept, the meeting is automatically created on their calendar.

Office is very popular among Windows users and it is very easy to use in many ways. In part this is due to its tight integration with the operating systems.

As with OS/2 applications, NT applications can be launched by clicking on a file designed to be used by the application. Clicking on a Word document, for example, launches Word with the desired document opened and ready to edit.

The problem I have encountered with this is that the linkage between document and application is based solely upon the document file name extension. As a result, files with the DOC extension all look like Word documents to Windows NT, so Windows NT will try to launch Word to edit them.

In OS/2, the linkage, or association, can be through the file extension or through the use of the extended attribute "Type." If applications use the Type attribute, the extension can be anything and no extension is needed. I use this for all of my DeScribe documents and find it a very easy way to make the associations.

Timestamp attributes

In the past few weeks, I have learned some interesting things about how Windows NT is like (and how it is different from) OS/2. One of the little differences that can affect how you deal with files involves the file timestamp attributes.

Three of the file attributes supported by many operating systems, including OS/2, are timestamps: Created, Last Modified, and Last Access. These three attributes can be used to locate files for processing by batch or command files so it is important to know how OS/2 treats these attributes and when they are changed.

The Created timestamp is generated only once, when the file is created. It is never changed.

The Last Modified timestamp is generated originally when the file is created and at that time it is identical to the Created timestamp. The Last Modified timestamp is changed to the current date and time each time the file is altered.

The Last Access timestamp is generated when the file is created; at that time it is identical to the Created timestamp. This timestamp is changed to the current date and time each time the file is accessed for any reason. It is not necessary even to read the file to look at its contents. Viewing the file's Settings or copying it to another location both count as access.

An example can be generated in the following manner. Copy a file from one location to another, where a file of that name does not already exist. Table 1 shows how the timestamps are affected. The file was created on May 17, 1998 at 2:24 PM. The file was then copied to another location on July 21 at 9:46 AM.

The date attributes on the original file are altered to reflect the current date and time for only the last accessed time stamp.

To compare the way Windows NT handles timestamps to the way in which OS/2 Warp handles timestamps, I used the same scenario for an example. Copy a file from one location to another, where a file of that name does not already exist. The file was created on May 17, 1998 at 2:24 PM. The file was then copied to another location on July 21 at 9:46 AM.

The timestamp values on the file are shown in Table 2. The differences are shown in boldface, with a gray background.

By looking at the table, you can see that copying a file in Windows NT changes the date created and last accessed to the date that the file was first created in its new location. The date the file was last modified is not changed. In addition, date attributes are not changed on the original file at all making it impossible to determine that the file was accessed for copying.

Although this may not seem significant, it can affect the way in which you write logon scripts or other command files that need to know the date and time a file was created, or any of the other timestamps. ◐

TABLE 2. Windows NT timestamp handling

File attribute	Value of original file when created	Value of original file after copy operation	Value on copy
Created	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	07/21/98 09:46:31 PM
Last Modified	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM
Last Accessed	05/17/98 02:24:10 PM	05/17/98 02:24:10 AM	07/21/98 09:46:31 AM

HTML 4, Style Sheets, and OS/2

by Richard Klemmer

On April 24, the World Wide Web Consortium (W3C) released a revised recommendation of the HTML 4 specification. With this latest release, HTML 4 now supports frames, style sheets, expanded accessibility for the disabled, and enhanced tables and forms. In this article, I describe some of the new HTML 4 features, including Cascading Style Sheets. Then I'll explain how they may affect OS/2 users.

HTML 4

HTML 4 is the latest recommendation of the W3C's HTML language specification. One main enhancement is in the area of accessibility. HTML 4 can make the Web much easier to surf for the disabled, especially for the visually impaired.

The new elements, ABBR and ACRONYM, can assist speech synthesizers in recognizing abbreviations and acronyms. If Web developers provide the optional "title" and "lang" attributes, they can specify what an abbreviation or acronym stands for, as well as the language, such as French or German.

Some additions in HTML 4 assist those who use text browsers, not just the vision impaired. The "alt" attribute is now required for <IMG> tags, and the <AREA> tag used for Client Side Image Maps. The "title" attribute mentioned above can also be used with images, sound clips, and even horizontal rules, to provide short descriptions of these elements.

Tables have also been updated in HTML 4 for better accessibility to improve grouping of columns, and they can now be displayed incrementally. It appears, however, that the W3C would like Style Sheets to take over much of the layout.

HTML 4 now officially incorporates some elements that have been around for a long time. Most notable among these is frames, which Netscape introduced to the world with the initial release of Navigator 2.0. Frames let Web developers create sites with multiple views, or frames, within the Netscape window. For example, a Netscape window could have a small frame at the top with a banner ad, a frame on the left with navigational links for the entire site, and a main frame with the content of that page.

I've been framed!

Although frames can make navigation of large Web sites easier, very often the implementation is poor, causing problems. The most common Web designer mistake is in linking to URLs outside of their Web site. Using my example above, imagine that you had a standard http link to the OS/2 Supersite in the main frame that looks something like this:

```
<A>
HREF="http://www.os2ss.com">
OS/2 Supersite</A>
```

When the viewer clicks on that link, the Supersite loads into that frame. But the banner at the top and the navigation links on the left are still present in the Navigator window. This causes confusion, since the Title Bar still lists your site's title, and the location box still lists your URL. This could also be considered misrepresentation, since it appears that the Supersite is part of your Web site.

A simple way to prevent this problem is to add the "TARGET=_top" property into the link, like so:

```
<A
HREF="http://www.os2ss.com"
TARGET=_top> OS/2 Super-
site</A>
```

This ensures that the Supersite will load into the entire Netscape window. More developers are implementing frames properly, but still too many Web sites have this problem.

Another important design option, frequently left out of sites using frames, is the NOFRAME content. With the <NOFRAME> tag, developers can provide the same information for browsers that do not support frames. Often, you'll find only a brief message, stating that you are using an older browser and you should upgrade. For personal Web sites this is tolerable, but for any commercial site it's inexcusable.

I like to provide the ability to turn off frames, even for those whose browsers can render them. This way, you won't alienate anyone.

Cascading style sheets

Style sheets give Web designers the ability to separate the presentation and layout of a Web page from the actual HTML codes. Cascading style sheets (CSS) are the W3C's official recommendation for using style sheets. On May 12, 1998, the W3C released its recommendation for Cascading Style Sheets level 2 (CSS2).

Cascading style sheets let you define the appearance of elements on the Web page, as well as the position. You can define the style of elements, such as emphasis <EM>, for all occurrences on the Web page by using Cascading Style Sheets to give them the same color and font type, for example **Red** and **Times New Roman**.

CSS styles can be applied to HTML elements in three ways. They can be specified within the HTML document at the location of the tag, in the documents HEAD section, or in an external file that can be used with multiple HTML documents.

Example 1 shows how to define a style in the document's HEAD section.

All occurrences of the emphasis tag will appear in red, and as Times New Roman in the HTML document. It's always good to provide a generic font family, such as the "serif" in the example. This provides a fallback mechanism if the client is unable to display the named font.

To accomplish the same style using an external file, first create the external CSS file, named generic.css, as in Example 2a. Then link that file to the HTML document as shown in Example 2b.

To override the style of a particular occurrence of an element within the HTML document, you could provide a definition at the

location of the element, as in example 3.

You can also import an external style sheet into the STYLE definition in the HEAD section by using the @import rule in the <STYLE> tag. This lets you bring multiple external style sheets into the document, since you can only have one LINK defined for the HTML document. The @import rule must precede any other style definitions, as you see in example 4.

Cascading style sheets are a vast and powerful tool for Web designers. What I have shown you barely scratches the surface of what can be accomplished with the latest recommendation from the W3C.

Where does OS/2 fit in?

Of course, the most important thing on OS/2 users' minds, when discussing the latest specifications for Web design, is: can we take advantage of them?

As you know, Web Explorer, the original browser for OS/2, was discontinued by IBM in favor of Netscape Navigator. However, the version of Navigator currently available for OS/2 is a hybrid of 2.02 and 3.0, which does not support style sheets or the latest HTML specifications.

The original release of Netscape Communicator 4.0 for other platforms had some support for Style Sheets, but not for HTML 4.0. When IBM delivers Communicator for OS/2, it's possible that it will include support for HTML and style sheets beyond what is available in the current Navigator 4.04 version.

When Netscape released the source code for Navigator version 5, termed Mozilla, in January of this year, developers outside of IBM got the opportunity to create a native version. Currently, the only active port is the Warpzilla project, which currently has the back end finished; work on the front end interface has begun. The layout for all Mozilla releases will be handled by the NGLayout engine which was released under the same license agreement as Navigator version 5.

This will eventually have support for HTML 4.0 and CSS2.

What may be the most promising solution for enjoying HTML 4.0 and Style Sheets on OS/2 is Opera Software's Project Magic OS/2 port. According to Opera, the OS/2 version will have all the features of the Windows version. Currently, Opera has support for CSS2 in version 3.3, and is working on adding support for HTML 4.0.

Finding more information

HTML 4.0 and Cascading Style Sheets: www.w3c.org

Warpzilla: http://people.netscape.com/law/warpzilla

NGLayout: www.mozilla.org/newlayout

Opera Software's Project Magic: www.operasoftware.com/alt_os.html

Example 1:

```
<HTML>
  <HEAD>
  <TITLE>Style Sheet Example</TITLE>
  <STYLE type="text/css">
    EM { color: red;
  font-family: "Times New Roman", serif }
  </STYLE>
  </HEAD>
  <BODY>
    <H1>Example of Cascading Style Sheets</H1>
    <P>
    This example will show everything within
the <EM>emphasis</EM> tag as red.
  </BODY>
</HTML>
```

Example 2a:

```
EM { color: red;
        font-family: "Times New Roman", serif  }
```

Example 2b:

```
<HTML>
  <HEAD>
  <TITLE>Style Sheet Example</TITLE>
  <LINK rel="stylesheet" href="generic.css"
type="text/css">
  </HEAD>
  <BODY>
    <H1>Example of Cascading Style Sheets</H1>
    <P>
    This example will show everything within
the <EM>emphasis</EM> tag as red.
  </BODY>
</HTML>
```

Example 3:

```
...
<P>
This will override the <EM STYLE="color:
orange; font-family: Courier>emphasis</EM>
style defined in the Documents HEAD section.
...
```

Example 4:

```
...
<HEAD>
<STYLE type="text/css">
    @import url("generis.css")
</STYLE>
</HEAD>
...
```

In search of speed

by Dick Krueger

Well, I've gone and done it. Yep, I signed up for cable Internet service. I couldn't pass up the offer of free installation and only $29.95 per month for unlimited access. Oh, it's also $15 per month to rent a cable modem; considering the purchase cost and the current lack of an industry standard, I thought it prudent to rent for a while. Plus—I almost forgot—Internet service requires basic cable service at $10.95 a month.

I know what you're saying. "Fifty-six dollars a month to surf the 'Net? Are you crazy?" Probably so, but not for the reasons you're thinking. First of all, I was already paying for basic cable service. So that's not a new cost. Second, I dropped my previous ISP, for a savings of $20 a month. Third, I freed up a $15-a-month telephone line that is now being put to other uses. Net increase in monthly cost for Internet service: about $10.

Why spend another $10/month? The first answer is "speed." How about 50 to 100 times faster than the old dialup connection? Admittedly, it's not always that much faster. The bottleneck now is typically the server on the other end or the links between here and there. Even so, Web page loading and file transfers usually take place in a fraction of the time.

High on speed

But, there's another reason: speed. No, this isn't about the speed of the connection. It's about being connected all the time. No more waiting for a dialup connection. My PC runs all the time. When it's not in use, the monitor is off, but Netscape and Post Road Mailer are always there. PRM checks for new mail every few minutes and beeps if it finds some. If I happen to be nearby and hear the beep, I can just turn on the monitor and start reading it. Anytime I have a spare moment or two, I can turn on the monitor, check for email, and start surfing. If there's an interruption I can walk away and come back to it later without worrying about reconnecting. When I'm done, I turn off the monitor and leave.

Phoenix is one of the most heavily wired areas in the world. 'Net surfers who live in this area have a lot of choices. In addition to many competing dialup Internet service providers, we have ISDN and ADSL from the local phone company. Many areas of the valley already have access through the local cable company. My next door neighbor has had a small microwave antenna installed that yields high speed incoming data through a local provider. There is also a company that provides high speed incoming data via satellite dish. It's only a mat-

ter of time before the power company offers Internet access. [*Uh, it already does. Cybertrails is owned by Arizona Public Service. —Ed*] This embarrassment of riches means low prices and lots of choices.

For more than two years I've been looking at the alternatives. Right now, cable seems to be the best for me.

Getting it working with OS/2

My cable connection has been up and running for more than a month now. Am I happy with it? You bet! Did I have any problems? You bet! The cable company only knows Windows. The software that handles account configuration (changing the password, for instance) won't run in Win-OS/2. The TCP/IP configuration information they provided was geared towards Windows and their own software. After decoding (with some help from Mike Briggs and Bill Schindler) and after a minor correction or two, I was up and running.

Would I recommend cable Internet access for OS/2 users? Yes, but make sure you have a PC with Windows 95/98/NT for the installer to do his magic. (I borrowed one from Mike Briggs. Thanks, Mike!) Then get some help from someone who's already dealt with the OS/2 configuration issues. ☺

Object (Desktop) of my desire

by Esther Schindler

I'm not sure if Stardock Systems' Object Desktop is OS/2's top-selling utility, but it must be close to the number-one spot on OS/2 software best-seller lists. It's more certain that Brad Wardell, Stardock's president, is among the OS/2 community's most colorful and entertaining characters.

We'll be able to combine the two at the general meeting of the Phoenix OS/2 Society on Tuesday, September 8, as Brad shows off the brand-new Object Desktop 2.0. The summer's over, the weather is cooling down, and we have an always-entertaining presenter. How could you miss this?!

What's in Object Desktop 2.0?

The new version of Object Desktop has a completely new look, improved performance, and increased compatibility with OS/2 Warp 4. Stardock also added features and improvements suggested by OS/2 users. New features include a revamped Control Center that includes "lay outs" for setting up virtual desktops, real-time Internet performance monitoring capabilities, and virtual desktop start up features (allowing users to launch a program into a particular virtual desktop). The Enhanced folder has also been, well, enhanced, including a tool bar to bring OS/2's GUI features up and beyond what is

expected to be available on Windows NT 5.

Object Desktop 2.0 is the result of almost two years of effort by Stardock's OS/2 development team. It's the culmination of Stardock's advanced user interface technologies.

The simplicity of the user interface hides a great deal of effort in bringing OS/2 to the next generation. Starting with Object Desktop 2.0, the OS/2 folder window becomes the master user interface object on OS/2.

How much more functionality are we talking about? Let's examine just one of the new features: enhanced folders.

Enhanced Folders? Cool!

Enhanced Folder 2.0 starts by adding a plethora of additional push-button functionality to the base folder class. No longer are you forced to dig through folder menus to access frequently used commands. The toolbar provides a quick means to access folder display options and a convenient "open parent directory" button facilitates folder navigation. It's especially handy if you browse new folders in the existing one.

However, the most obvious enhancement is a new drop-down combo box. From this box, you can launch and connect to files, Web sites, ftp sites, network servers, or any directory by typing in where you want to go. Object Desktop 2.0 automatically parses what you've typed and performs the appropriate operation.

Forget about sitting there with a stopwatch and guesstimating how fast your downloads are going. Object NetScan, a Control Center derivative, interfaces on a low level with the TCP/IP components on

your system to let you know exactly how much information has been transferred both into and out of your machine and how quickly it was transferred. Windows users have to shell out a pretty chunk of change for programs that purport to monitor the speed of your Internet connection, but most carry caveats that stretch from here to next week. Because of the level Object NetScan integrates with your system, it doesn't matter if you're connected via the lowliest of analog modems or your own personal T3. Object NetScan shows you exactly how your Internet connection is performing.

That's just two tiny items. Want more? You'll have to attend this meeting!

When and where

The general meeting is held on Tuesday, September 8, at 7:00pm at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap. The random access Q&A starts at 6:30pm, and arriving early gives you a chance to catch up with your friends.

With Brad around, you know that we'll have a big crowd at the "after-meeting-meeting" at Coyote Springs Brewpub. 🍺

Type in a directory, a server, a file, or even a website and it'll take you there
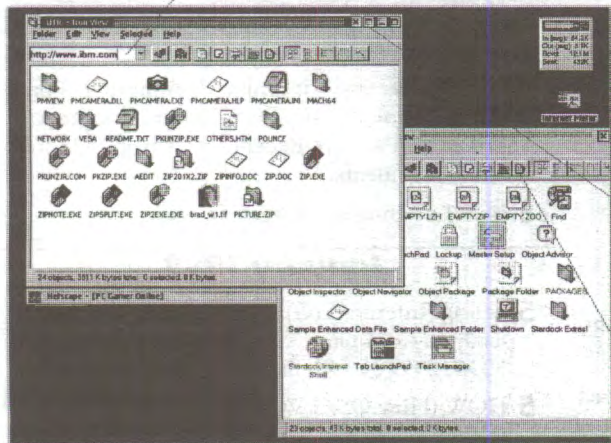
Internet Meter will tell you how fast your Internet connection is.

Roll-up button can save you screen space

Toolbar can make file operations a snap

Coming events

This is a list of events scheduled by the Phoenix OS/2 Society and other OS/2 user groups. Unless otherwise noted, active members may attend any scheduled event for free. (Other groups may have different attendance policies. Please check their Web sites for information about meeting schedules and attendance policies.)

Meeting notes

For the latest updates on the Society's event calendar, check the Web site at http://www.possi.org.

For meeting information and other queries, call the Phoenix OS/2 Society's voice mail at 602-949-4341.

If you have suggestions, ideas, or comments on the content of general meetings, contact the Society's Program Chair, Esther Schindler, at the general meetings or send email to esther@bitranch.com.

September

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
		1	2	3	4	5
6	7	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24	25	26
27	28	29	30			

October

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18	19	20	21	22	23	24
25	26	27	28	29	30	31

November

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15	16	17	18	19	20	21
22	23	24	25	26	27	28
29	30					

December

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27	28	29	30	31		

January

S	M	T	W	T	F	S
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10	11	12	13	14	15	16
17	18	19	20	21	22	23
24	25	26	27	28	29	30
31						

September 1998

1 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

1 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for October issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

8 General meeting; Stardock showing Object Desktop 2.0. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

26 Board meeting and magazine prep. Meeting is 10:00am to 1:00pm. Eat a brunch, learn about the inner workings of the Society, and help get *extended attributes* ready to mail. Location: Bill and Esther Schindler's house in north Scottsdale, 9355 E Mark Lane. Call 585-5852 or send email to esther@bitranch.com for directions. Remember to bring a potluck dish to share, too.

October 1998

6 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

6 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for November issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

13 General meeting; The Graham Utilities, presented by Chris Graham, from Australia. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

16 Warpstock '98. October 16–18 in Chicago, IL. See the Warpstock Web site at www.warpstock.org for more information.

24 Board meeting and magazine prep.

November 1998

3 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

3 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for December issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

10 General meeting; idot.com showing OS/2-ready hardware. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

15 Interested in a POSSI Comdex get-together, perhaps for pizza? Send a note to Esther at esther@bitranch.com

16 Comdex, through November 18. Las Vegas, NV.

28 Board meeting and magazine prep.

December 1998

1 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

1 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 Magazine submission deadline for January issue. Articles should be sent to editor@possi.org. For other arrangements, call 602-585-5852.

8 General meeting. Meeting is 7:00pm to 9:00pm. Q&A session is 6:30pm to 7:00pm. Location: Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

26 Board meeting and magazine prep.

January 1999

5 net.sig (Internet SIG). Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Mike Briggs. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

5 HOW (How OS/2 Works) GIG. Meeting is 6:00pm to 8:00pm. Coordinator Lyle Wilson. Location: KDC, 2999 N 44th St, 4th floor, Phoenix.

Meeting locations

General meetings are held at the Mountain Preserve Reception Center, 1431 East Dunlap, Phoenix.

From the Black Canyon, exit at Dunlap and head east. From the Squaw Peak, exit at Northern. Go west to 12th Street, turn right and go north to Dunlap, turn right, and it's two blocks up on the right.

The "How OS/2 Works General Interest Group" and the Internet SIG (net.sig) meet at Knowledge Development Center, 2999 N 44th St, Suite 400. That's just north of Thomas, in the building with the green dome. Plenty of free parking space is available in the garage behind the building. (●)
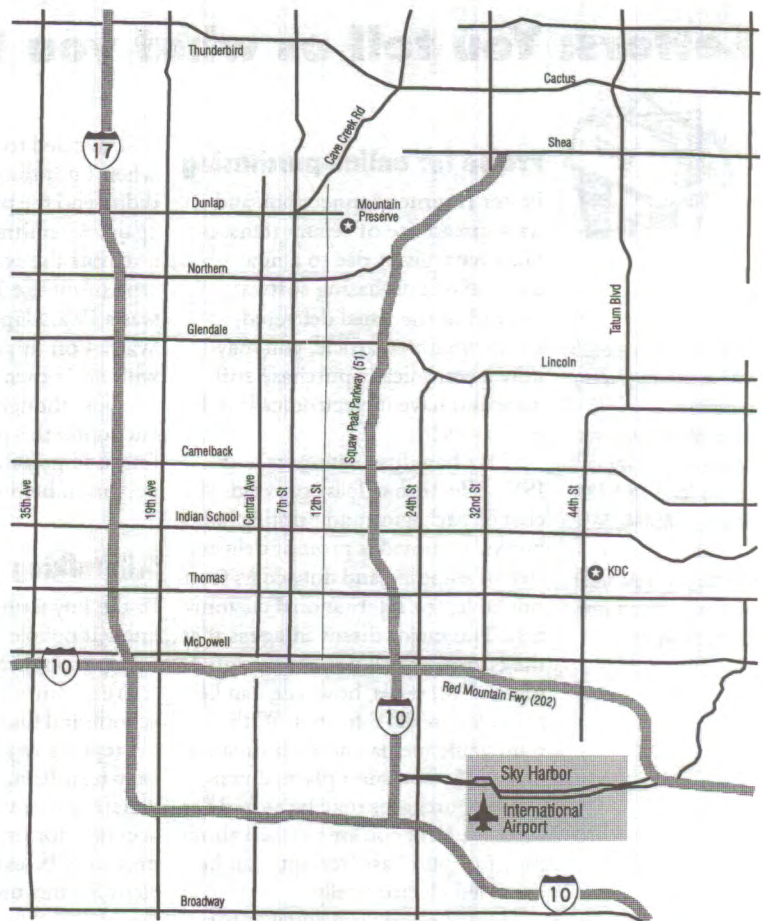
SIG news

net.sig

by Mike Briggs mike@possi.org

We got off to a slow start on making a family home page, but did discuss what would be needed to produce a web page. We decided that while a digital camera would be nice, a scanner would most likely serve better for getting images and graphics for the pages. We looked at the possibilities of a family web page being contributed to by relatives in other parts of the country.

Next month we should begin with actual work on a page with material from local members. The beta for NS Communicator 4.0 got installed along with the plug-in pack near the end of the meeting and we liked what we saw. See you next time. (●)

Program objects on the fly

Using the drives object, navigate to a directory that includes an executable file (ending in EXE or COM). Right-click on hte icon. Among the options in the pop-up menu is "create program object." Choose that option. You can place the new program object in any open folder. OS/2 gives the new object a default name of "Program Object" but you can edit it in the usual manner.

Save clipboard text to a file

It works. Highlight and copy something to the clipboard (cut or copy). Then go to the desktop, right-click, and select Paste. You will get a message box allowing you to save the contents of the clipboard *directly* to a filename with a WPS object class of your choosing.

You can choose to save it as a WPURL object instead of a data object; which will launch your default browser, and open the URL.

Letters: You tell us what you think

Praise for online purchasing

Faster Internet connections and widespread use of secure transactions have given rise to a new method of purchasing software. Instead of the usual delivered, shrink wrapped article, you may now electronically purchase software and have it electronically delivered as well.

This benefits customers and ISVs. Electronic delivery avoids the cost of packaging and printing handbooks. It provides prompt delivery, free of shipping and duty costs (considerable, for international customers). The major disadvantage is that the customer will not get a printed manual. Manuals, however, can be provided in PDF format. With removable media and high capacity hard disks common place, downloaded purchases may be stored for further use. If you are worried about proof of purchase, receipts can be provided electronically.

This is clearly not suitable for large applications such as office suites, but it's only a matter of time.

I personally have benefited a great deal from this service, and certainly encourage all OS/2 ISVs who offer software of a suitable size to offer sales and delivery electronically. OS/2 has users worldwide and ISVs should ensure easy and all means of access to their software.

Allie Martin

Try again. And again.

I am a new member of POSSI. I just received my second *extended attributes* and I must say you all do a fine job.

I have a small story to tell about installing OS/2 Warp 4 on my new Dell XPS R400.

The new video cards weren't supported for Warp, so I had to change video cards. No big problem.

I got the fix for big DASD and modified the installation disk so I could install on the large hard drive. Oh boy, I was ready to install!

Fat chance. When the Installation was ready to read from the CD, I got a message that MOUSE$ wasn't functioning. I tried IBM, but got no answer.

I decided to try again. This time, when I got the error message, I didn't end the process but said to try again. After three or four "try again" attempts the system asked me what type of mouse I was using; I said it was a PS2. Happy ending. I've used Warp 4 on this machine since then, with no known problems.

I just thought others might encounter this problem and, like me, find it impossible to find another person to help out.

Richard C Anderson

Still talking

In the July issue, you wanted to know if people are still using speech recognition technology.

Yes, I am. Currently I am back in school, and find speech dictation for my reports *very* helpful. I can basically read from various sources and dictate with a very high degree of accuracy for my reports. This has proven to be extremely fast and efficient for this use.

Raymond Albers

More to say

I agree with your observation that using speech to control my desktop is not the most efficient way of navigation. The mouse and keyboard do a much better job. Also, can you imagine a multi-person office environment where everyone talks to his computer? Phones are bad enough!

However, I still frequently use speech recognition. I dictate letters, historical, and other documents. In 1994, I bought IBM's Personal Dictation System Adapter and the software for both English and German. Since I had the hardware, I did not upgrade to Warp 4's built-in speech recognition. I was used to the "broken" rhythm, a small pause after each word. I have two languages to chose from, and I get my stuff done.

A last comment: Excellent article on Object Rexx! I was always looking for array handling routines.

Bernhard Krevet

Ups and downs

I have had my ups and downs with IBM speech recognition from a developer stand point. The pediatric software that I market is a native OS/2 application. Originally, I started out with great gusto and invested considerable time and resource in developing a version that integrated IBM VoiceType into the application. When I saw IBM dropping the ball with VTD for OS/2, I said "enough is enough." I stopped writing code for it.

However, I did not give up on its usability as an outside component. I mention it to physicians during my Peds H&P sales presentation. I usually say that it comes with OS/2, and if you purchase my software, you might look into VTD training by contacting an IBM Business Partner.

I personally cannot use dictation for writing technical articles because my head is busy composing what I want to write. But I think that for people who do a lot of spontaneous dictating, it works well.

You are absolutely right about the interfaces not being complementary to the use of VTD. Either IBM has to address that, or a developer must constrain how VTD is used in a particular application. Very little assistance comes from IBM to make what they invented useful.

IBM is so focused on making their money on NT and selling millions of copies of ViaVoice that everything else goes by the wayside. That is why I don't get excited about a lot of IBM offerings any more. If they're riding Microsoft's coattails, I'll buy Microsoft technology instead.

Again, I am not leaving out VTD altogether. Rather, I make it an option for a customer, with the understanding that VTD is not going to make them super productive overnight. They have to learn my application first and then VTD. If they try to use both at the same time, failure is most likely.

John Wubbel
www.PediatricNetwork.com

3Com in two part harmony

by Joel Frey

It wasn't too long ago that, for most of us who had one, the modem was a toy. Configuring and using modems was a little arcane, and their utility was limited as much by their lack of ubiquity as speed. Although modems were used commercially prior to the advent of the PC, if you had one for personal use in the early days of the PC, there was a good chance you were using it to talk to someone else about modems and other computer hardware.

We're at the point now where many people consider a modem as much of a necessity as the telephone. The history of commercial technology is rife with successes of hobbyist origin. Other devices require a substantial investment just to move past the idea stage. They come on the market as practical devices and develop a hobbyist following.

At our July general meeting, we saw a presentation by a company whose main products are on both ends of this scale. Brian Buckley and Keith Noah of 3Com came to talk about USR modems, the Palm Pilot, and the Bigpicture Video products. Keith flew in from San Francisco, where 3Com is headquartered, and Brian is the retail representative for Arizona and New Mexico. The interest in the first two subjects was so great that the Bigpicture products never got a chance. Their presentation was split almost evenly between modems and the Palm Pilot.

I remember when...

The first modem I encountered was housed in a commercial refrigerator-sized box attached to a System/360 Model 65. I think it was called a "2705 Teleprocessing Unit." I don't know its speed or if the device itself was all that large, since just about everything on a 360 was in a similar box and some of them were mostly empty except for a few printed circuits and long lengths of ribbon wire. It was used by an application that could charitably be called a message switch, for communication between headquarters and field

offices. The application, if not the the device itself, was prone to frequent failure, and it was necessary to fall back on its predecessor, a manual dialup teletype machine that sent messages from paper tape and printed incoming ones.

A few years later I began using TTY terminals on a 300 Baud connection, including a portable (and I use the term loosely), that printed on thermal paper and used an "acoustic coupler," i.e., a couple of suction cups that fit over the handset of what was at the time virtually the only type of phone in use. It seemed pretty high-tech then, but I was chuckling recently at a not so old 9600 Baud modem the size of a Webster's Collegiate that had been abandoned in a printer room at work. With all of the new types of high-speed internet access becoming available, I guess I can expect similar amusement soon enough from the 56K modem on which I just spent good money.

3Com's modems

3Com's modem line includes X2/V.90, ADSL, and ISDN units. Brian and Keith pointed out that the company designs and builds all of the components in their modems and owns all of their technology, whereas some competitors buy off-the-shelf components and assemble them. According to Brian, the bottom end in speed is now 14,400, and that market is almost dead. For most people, that train left the station a few years ago because of the ever-increasing bulk of the average Web page. The 33.6 modem will be gone soon, with over ninety percent of the market using 56K within the next two years.

While polling the audience on the modem speeds in use, they were reminded that Phoenix has cable modems. Keith noted that he lives in Silicon Valley and can't get cable Internet access, but pointed out that if you were considering buying or leasing a cable modem, be aware of a new industry standard for them, MCNS (Multimedia Cable Network Subscriber). The cable modems

being offered by Cox Cable are proprietary technology; at some point in the near future, this standard will make those obsolete.

There was a question about whether V.90 is really a standard. Brian said that the spec was published and frozen, but has not been ratified by the ITUT, which is the international telephone standards body. They pointed out that 3Com/USR was the first to the market with this standard, but that a V.90 modem can still talk to an X2 server. USR's modems use flash ROM so they can be upgraded by dialup—but not from OS/2. Your options are to use Windows 3.1, Windows 95/98, or a Macintosh. If none of these are possible or palatable, call 3Com's upgrade line. They'll arrange for you to send in your modem and will send back an upgraded one.

Your mileage may vary. Aside from the 53K limit imposed by the FCC, a number of factors can affect your actual connect speed including older equipment at the central office, the quality and age of the phone lines, and the presence of a line amplifier in remote telephone lines. If you and your ISP both use a USR modem pool, you are likely to get a better end-to-end connection.

Palm Pilots

I like the Palm Pilot, but not just because it isn't another Microsoft product—although it's nice to see someone beat them, for a change. This product line has over seventy percent of the market in handheld computing. If you haven't looked closely at a Palm Pilor, check them out. They have decent handwriting recognition (using a slightly specialized character set that is easily learned), two-way synchronization with a twin desktop environment that can run in WinOS2, and they can run third-party applications (over a thousand on the Internet).

Of course, Microsoft is pushing Windows CE as a competitor to the compact and efficient Palm OS. If you're not already Windows-weary, you will be when you compare one

of these bulky, slow, memory-intensive also-rans to the Palm Pilot.

I apologize if this sounds like an advertisement. But, you don't need a HumVee to go to the corner store.

The Palm OS was designed by Jeff Hawkins as a digital replacement for the Day Timer-type of organizer rather than a miniaturized laptop with standard PC apps. Palm Computing was a company of thirteen people acquired as a separate division by 3Com after Palm was unable to find funding in Silicon Valley because other potential backers thought the device needed to be much more complex than proposed. The Palm division now has about three hundred people.

The PalmPilot is now in its third generation. Until recently, the line consisted of the Personal and Professional, which were preceded by the 1000 and 5000. The Professional had twice the memory, at 1 MB, than the Personal, plus a modem option.

The upgrade path is basically a complete replacement for the internal card, which includes the memory. I've stuck with the original applications with my Personal. In eight months of use, I've used less than half of the 512K. That picture changes substantially with games and other graphics-type applications, but there's an enormous capacity for text-only information.

The newest PalmPilot is the Palm III. In addition to increased memory, it has an infrared

feature that allows two devices to exchange information directly. If you own an earlier PalmPilot, don't despair, because an upgrade brings your existing device to the Palm III level. At somewhat less than half the cost of a new device, you can buy the upgrade and pop it in.

Although ideas for new features are abundant, Brian and Keith said future changes must still meet these criteria: "It's gotta stay quick, it's gotta stay upgradeable, and it's gotta stay affordable." 3Com will only add what users need, and the form factor will get smaller, not larger. There are, and will continue to be, hardware add-ons for new capabilities. For example, a GPS (Global Positioning System) device is available that attaches to the docking connector, although no one present had tried it. Motorola will be producing a pager card for the Palm III that will link incoming pages to existing address book information and log them, although the trade-off is the loss of the infrared link, due to size constraints. Aftermarket vendors offer memory-doubling upgrades for the Professional.

OS/2 support?

Naturally, it didn't take long for the subject of a native OS/2 PalmPilot desktop to come up. Someone pointed out that the obstacle was the "HotSynch" software component. The device's content is synchronized with that on the PC via a serial con-

nection. When the process is initiated, some sort of handshake takes place, followed by a bi-directional exchange of information for each category (address book, calendar, etc). The internals of this process must be known for a third party to develop such a desktop. Keith said he would find out what is required for this to take place.

It's possible that they actually did talk about their other products. Although I attend these meetings and try to listen carefully, I rely largely on a tape recorder. Besides failing to notice that I needed to change tapes for an unknown span of time, the last part of the meeting consisted of Brian and Keith taking questions in parallel on both subjects, as well as a number of side conversations between audience members. This created an indecipherable din on my cheap, screechy tape recorder. My ears hurt. I might have missed something important, so check their Web site at www.3com.com/user_groups ◖

Notebook tab menu

Open a Warp 4 notebook and right-click on the notebook tabs.

A context menu will pop up that lists all the tabs. You don't have to scroll back and forth to find the tab you're looking for!

DOS programs print faster

Some older DOS applications won't print until you close the session. To make the program print immediately, change the PRINT_TIMEOUT setting in the DOS application's properties notesbook. You may have to experiment a little to find a setting that doesn't kick out your job too early.

CD drive not ready?

I just installed a CD changer, and found that if I don't put disks in all of the drives before I boot, I get a message that drive x is not ready. You can avoid the problem by adding this line to CONFIG.SYS:

```
AUTOFAIL=YES
```

PMNotes Version 1.31

by Elliot Abramowitz and Marc Abramowitz

PMNotes replaces the sticky notes that you currently use to scribble down information and which clutter up your computer monitor and desk area. It's a shareware utility for when you are at your computer and need to save some bit of information. Such notes can include a Web address that an IRC friend recommends, a phone number, or just some information you need while on a phone call.

PMNotes can be set to run on top of the application window that you are working on. This gives the user instant access to create a "sticky" note as the occasion arises.

Using PMNotes is fairly easy. You can configure the options so that the program behaves in the manner you wish. For instance, you can tell PMNotes how the mouse buttons should operate. This control is located on the Main Tab. (Note that PMNotes in its unregistered form will not display the HotKeys Tab.) You can also set up how your notes will appear, and some of the settings for the notes.

PMNotes is easy to work with. Just click on the PMNotes Icon and Drag, creating a new blank note. Once the note is created it can be further configured and even given an alarm setting.

One neat feature is PMNotes' ability to either list the notes in the Windows Menu, or hide them and only display them through a scroll listing that does not show up in the Windows Menu. The Tab can be called via a Hot Key combination.
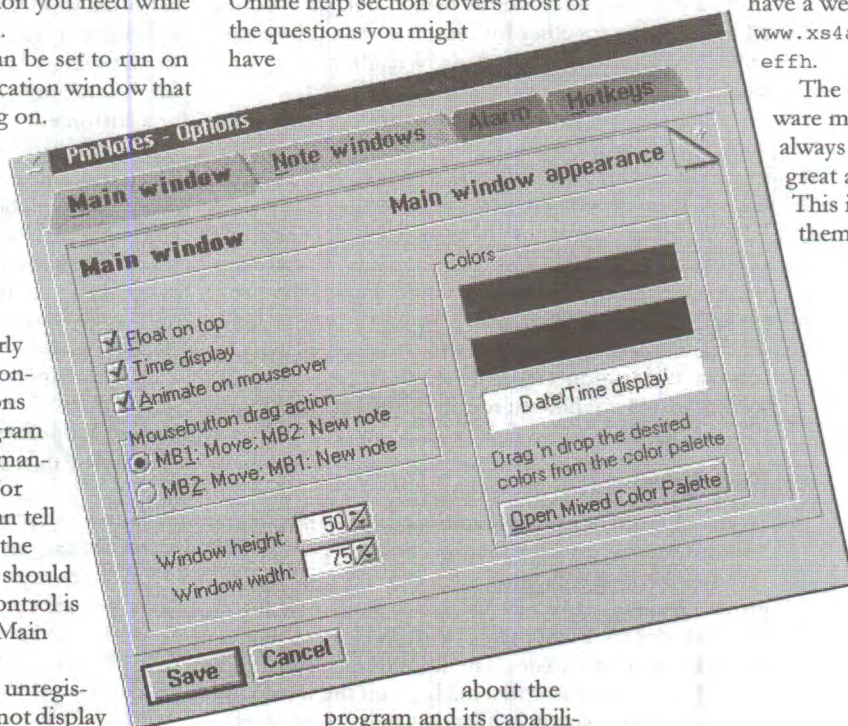
All the documentation is stored in the directory where you unzip the program. A help file offers tips on its usage and a program history shows you how the program has progressed since its inception. The Online help section covers most of the questions you might have about the program and its capabilities. There is even a section of helpful hints or tips for using the program that some people might find useful.

As the program stands now, it's a great application. I found one problem, though, using it under a server environment; the program does not recognize that different users, thereby presenting the existing notes. If a Warp Server guru out there can help the author in creating a routine to check the logon id and recognize that a different user is running the program, then PMNotes would be a killer application.

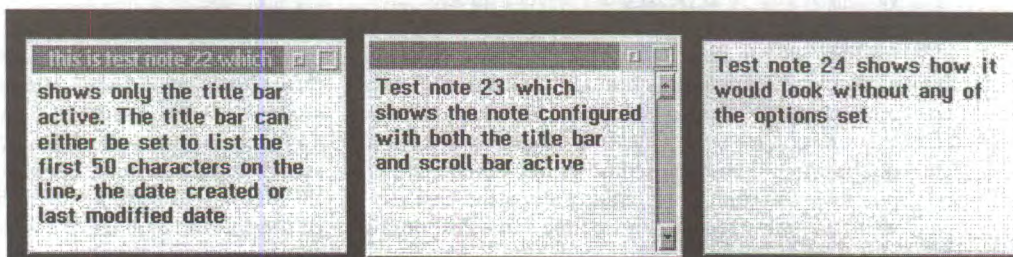PMNotes registration fee is a modest $13.

Try out the program. I really think you will like it. Contacting the author is just a matter of emailing him at jeffh@xs4all.nl. He does have a web page at www.xs4all.nl/~jeffh.

The OS/2 software market is always looking for great applications! This is one of them. ◉

Creating a folder object restoration tool

by John Wubbel

Last month, I talked about finding a programming project. This month, I talk a little about what happens after you decide what type of program to write.

After deciding to go forward with a programming requirement, the next task is to figure out how to do it. The research phase is an effort to gather as much information as possible regarding the domain of the problem in hopes of engineering a solution. There are extremes whereby very little information is available or there is an abundance of material.

In either case, it takes more time to bring the sources of information together for digestion than it takes to actually write the program code. What better way to demonstrate this than with an example?

When the Workplace Shell first came out, customers sometimes had problems losing desktop icons, resulting in rebuilding the INI files to try to recover. As applications were developed, firms realized they had to customize the desktop, perhaps with a folder and icons representing the application program files. Usually, this was taken care of by the application's installation program. It was not immediately obvious to companies writing applications that they should supply a utility to recreate their product icons on the desktop, so that customers would not have to re-run the installation if they lost the desktop.

Recreating icons

So you guessed it, the programming project is to write a short utility to recreate the icons on the desktop. The first step in developing the utility is to do some background reading about the Workplace Shell to learn what takes place when folders and icons are created from the templates folder. The second step is to search for technical references that might point the way to the use of APIs that would facilitate the creation of objects on the desktop or within folders.

Unfortunately, it seems like you can never find the answers all in one location or reference document. The pieces are dispersed across multiple redbooks, developer magazine articles, and maybe even a snippet of code from somewhere.

In the VisualAge C++ Tools Folder, an icon is integrated into the toolkit folder called Object Utility/2. This object utility was useful in understanding what the properties for a particular object on the desktop consisted of. It is used to get a report in the form of a dialog by dragging and dropping an icon over the Object Utility/2 feature icon. Additional digging around in the various rc files also yields clues about how OS/2's installation process populates the desktop. I found data for DB2 v1.2 in the \os2\install\db2desk.prf file.

As the information is brought together, sometimes more than one reading is required in order to understand or correlate the articles. And almost without a doubt, more than one method of implementation is possible. To refine your thinking about the best way to write the utility requires more time and effort during the research process. For example, writing a REXX procedure might accomplish the task as well as taking advantage of the available Presentation Manager APIs. The standard REXX utility function SysCreateObject has the counterpart PM API WinCreateObject for doing the same job, that of creating a folder or program object. The implementation may be more or less influenced by the target end-user population rather than by the alternative preferences of the programmer.
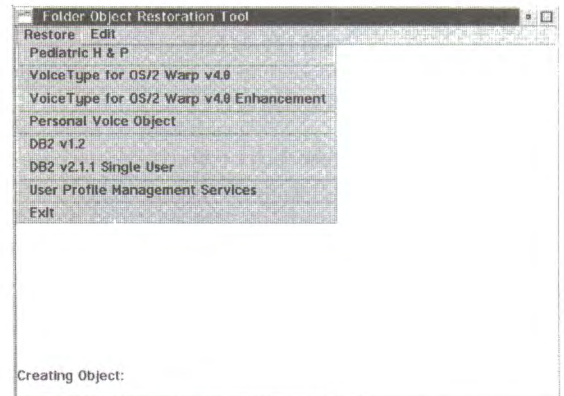
In my case, I made the program a PM application that could support the recreation of several application environments for my customers. I named the program "Folder Object Restoration Tool" (FORT). Figure 1 displays the menu item list of programs that it can restore for a customer.

The actual use of the API is straightforward in terms of understanding the parameter requirements. The hard part again comes from the research phase of the project because to recreate any object on the desktop, you need to know its properties that serves as the input for the API parameters. An example follows:

```
CHAR szFolderName[] = "WPFOLDER";
CHAR szFolderTitle[] = "THE MEDICINE CHEST";
CHAR szSetupString[] = "ICONFILE=D:\\HPP\\"
    "BACKUP\\CROSS.ICO;OBJECTID=<WP_PEDS";
CHAR szFolderLocation[] = "<WP_DESKTOP";
```

Whereby the call to the API would look something like:

```
hobject = WinCreateObject(
    szFolderName,
    szFolderTitle,
    szSetupString,
    szFolderLocation,
    ulFlags
    );
```


Folder Object Restoration Tool
Restore Edit
Pediatric H & P
VoiceType for OS/2 Warp v4.0
VoiceType for OS/2 Warp v4.0 Enhancement
Personal Voice Object
DB2 v1.2
DB2 v2.1.1 Single User
User Profile Management Services
Exit

Creating Object:

The third parameter, the setup string, is the most difficult to develop and write properly. There is a wide variety of setup identifiers such as ICONFILE, PROGTYPE, and OBJECTID followed by a string that represents the property configurations. FORT contains all these strings in a string table and the program takes care of the specific hard drive destination problems on-the-

fly. If the setup string is incorrect, your results will be unsatisfactory.

Other APIs are associated with WinCreateObject for managing objects. The Object Utility/2 and the VoiceType icon called Voice Manager are similar objects that have specific DLL(s) as their base resource. If you open the menu for the object and select the Properties menu item, the notebook that displays is not your typical program properties object. If you try to deliberately delete the icon, it is somewhat more difficult to get rid of because it is more tightly bound to the Workplace Shell desktop. Recreating these objects is slightly more challenging, because you have to check to see if the object exists. If it does not, you have to register the object before you can create it. Listing 1 is an example of a small utility to test and register the Voice-Type objects that are of this nature.

You might have noticed that in the setup string example above, the keyword ICONFILE directly points to the icon file. For the Voice Manager, the following data for the WinCreateObject API was found in the WPINSTALL.INI file. Again, this presumes VoiceType was previously installed or else the data would probably not be available in the INI file.

```
STRINGTABLE
BEGIN
WWCLASSNAME "SpeechWWProgram";
VMTITLE "Voice Manager";
WWSETUPSTRING "ICONRESOURCE=2701,SPMRI_US;
PROGTYPE=PM;HELPPANEL=1600;HELPLIBRARY=*:\\
VT\\SPCH_RO\\HELP\\WWUS.HLP;OBJECTID=
<SPCH_WW>";
WWPROGLOCATION "<WP_SPEECH>";
END
```

The actual icon resource is represented by ICONRE-SOURCE=2701. Since resources can come in the form of a DLL, this icon resides in SPMRI_US.DLL. Sometimes you can be misled by dragging a copy of the Voice Manager icon over to the Object Utility/2 icon; you see that SPCHOBJ.DLL is associated with the properties of the Voice Manager object. But, as you can see in Listing 1, the WinRegisterObjectClass second parameter specifies the objects DLL. SPMRI_US.DLL is only a resource DLL for the VoiceType product.

In this project, it took me longer to write the string table for FORT than it did to write the program code. The accuracy of the setup strings were directly related to the careful preparations done in the research phase where my original intentions had been to inquire how to code the program in the first place. And, since I was in such a big hurry to get on with the coding, I totally missed the significance of object registration during my background reading. I learned the hard way about it during the testing phase. 🐭

```c
#define INCL_DOS
#define INCL_WINWORKPLACE
#define INCL_WINSHELLDATA
#include <os2.h>
#include <stdio.h>
#include <string.h>
#include <ctype.h>

int main (int argc, char **argv)
    {
    HOBJECT hObject;
    BOOL    fSuccess;
    CHAR    szDictObject [] = "DictationObject";
    CHAR    szDLL [] = "SPCHOBJ";
    CHAR    szSpeechWW [] = "SpeechWWProgram";

/* check if Dictation Window registered */
    hObject = WinQueryObject("<SPCH_DICTATION>");

    if ( hObject != 0UL )
        {
/* object exists, no need to create     */
        printf("Object <SPCH_DICTATION> exists, no need to"
               "create. \n");
        }
    else
        {
        fSuccess = WinRegisterObjectClass(szDictObject, szDLL);

        if ( fSuccess )
            {
/* object registered successfully        */
            printf("Object registered successfully. \n");
            }
        else
            {
/* object not registered successfully    */
            printf("Object not registered successfully. \n");
            }

        }
/* check if VM object is registered      */
    hObject = WinQueryObject("<SPCH_WW>");

    if ( hObject != 0UL )
        {
/* object exists, no need to create      */
      printf("Object <SPCH_WW> exists, no need to create. \n");
        }
    else
        {
        fSuccess = WinRegisterObjectClass(szSpeechWW, szDLL);

        if ( fSuccess )
            {
/* object registered successfully        */
            printf("Object registered successfully. \n");
            }
        else
            {
/* object not registered successfully    */
            printf("Object not registered successfully. \n");
            }
        }
    }
```

Ghost for transferring disk and partition images

by David Ameiss

More information about Ghost can be found at www.ghostsoft.com or www.ghost.com.

David Ameiss says about himself, "I am a software developer for a small consulting firm (3 of us), who is unfortunately at the moment mired deep in the toxins of WinNT services and SQL. My office is in my home, and I share a network with my wife and two sons (3 and 5)."

Binary Research's Ghost (General Hardware Oriented System Transfer) transfers disk and partition images to-and-from different locations. Ghost, just acquired from Binary Research by Symantec, bills itself as providing "fast installation and recovery of Windows 95, Windows NT, and OS/2 workstations." That's right, OS/2 support right on the cover!

Well, sort of.

Ghost has two distinct uses. First it duplicates disks. Imagine if you had to roll out 50 new workstations, each set up identically. Using Ghost, you can install and configure one system, then dump the entire disk to an image file. You then load the image file onto each machine, and you're done.

The second use is in backup and disaster recovery: you dump individual partitions to and from an image file. This is really useful; I can recover from a complete disaster even if I can't boot from the hard drive to access backup software.

Starting from DOS

Ghost only operates properly when booted from a DOS partition or diskette. That's understandable, since it sports a DOS GUI interface, and one of Ghost's main functions is to dump and restore partitions. So, your first step is to build a DOS boot diskette. What's included on that diskette is determined by how you want to transfer the images.

Ghost supports four transfer methods. The first is transfer to-and-from a local device. That means *any* local device. If you have SCSI disks, include the DOS device driver and ASPI driver on the diskette, and Ghost can access them. This includes removeable media such as Zip or Jaz drives. I successfully dumped and restored a 500MB NTFS partition to three Zip disks.

Ghost provides nine levels of image file compression and supports SCSI tape drives—but only SCSI. You're limited to a single image file on the tape, but it works well. I successfully dumped and restored a 3GB HPFS partition to my DAT tape drive.

The second transfer method is peer-to-peer via parallel port or NetBIOS. For parallel transfer, a Laplink-style cable is required. One DOS machine is the master (where images are transferred from/to), and one DOS machine is the slave (where image files are stored). The manual has instructions for setting up the network files required for the NetBIOS connection. This worked as advertised, though it's of limited usefulness.

The third transfer method is Mapped Network MS Windows Volume. Fear not: this has nothing to do with Windows. Set up your boot diskette with appropriate network drivers and software, and you can map a network shared directory as a local drive letter. At this point, it's really another instance of transferring to and from a local device, just slower. For installations with multiple machines, this is probably the most useful scenario. Unfortunately, the manual makes it sound impossible for OS/2 users. Set-up instructions are provided, but assume you have an NT Server. Luckily, I do. I followed the instructions, analyzed the results, checked the Ghost Web page, and figured out what was going on. The Ghost Web page has links to download MS-Net disk images, which allow you to install an MS-Net client. You can use that working diskette as a model for other machines.

In the fourth transfer method, multicasting, you set up a whole bunch of client machines, ready to receive their disk image. They connect to a Ghost Server. A single image is sent to al machines simultaneously. For mass roll outs, this is great. For individual users, it's probably of no importance. The Ghost Server, by the way, runs under Windows or from a DOS machine. Boo.

The GUI interface is self-explanatory. Command-line switches allow Ghost to run unattended or from a batch file. Not all options available on the command line are accessible via the GUI, though. Some options allow partitions to be resized on the fly, such as when you put an image from a 1GB drive onto a 2GB drive. Alas, HPFS partitions can not be resized.

My biggest complaint is with Ghost's manual. I found it confusing. It took several readings and a lot of experimentation to figure out what it was trying to say. For a product that supports OS/2 (it says so, really!), OS/2 is mentioned in the manual once, and HPFS twice. All instructions are geared toward a Windows environment.

Ghost doesn't seem to handle errors, or unexpected situations, very well. If it encounters an error, it writes a log file to the C:\ directory, then drops you out of the program. When I was restoring from tape, Ghost exited when the tape wasn't in the drive, instead of prompting me to insert one. To a degree, I can understand this approach. When you deal with dumping and loading partitions, you probably don't want to make assumptions about error recovery, and the program seems to be oriented toward unattended operation.

When I encountered problems in the initial 5.0a release, I followed the Web page's advice to fill in a form to submit the problem. I never received a response. However, once I downloaded the latest 5.0e update, the problems went away.

For my home network (two Windows 95 machines, two OS/2 machines, a Windows NT Server, and a laptop with Windows NT and OS/2), Ghost is a great solution for disaster recovery. I save an image of the boot partition for each machine onto the OS/2 server; between that and regular backups, I can quickly recover from just about anything.

Ghost licensing is based on the number of workstations. The smallest license is for 25 workstations, at $375. At this price, it's probably not practical for most users. For networks and users with numerous workstations, it's well worth the price. ⊕

New and improved

compiled by Esther Schindler

Back in August 1995, IBM's Lou Gerstner explained to the financial community that OS/2 was positioned at the corporate computer user. IBM wanted to make it clear that home and small business users had no use for OS/2.

Stuff it, Lou.

Every month, we print a list of new and updated OS/2 applications. This month's haul required serious editing, as we started out with five pages of descriptions of new or improved utilities and applications for mere mortals who just happen to like OS/2's flexibility, robustness, features, connectivity, or just because it's a damn good place to play a computer game.

As always, this is just a descriptive list. We haven't tried out these applications... but you can. If you're a member of the Phoenix OS/2 Society, drop a note to the reviews editor (reviews@possi.org) if you see a package that looks interesting. Craig will explain what's expected of you (torture doesn't happen until the *second* month after your review is due, rumors to the contrary), and you'll be providing a service to the OS/2 community. It's fun, and we make your writing look good. Plus, you can show Lou that the end-user OS/2 community still doesn't listen to him. What's there to lose?

Night Vision 2.2

Night Vision 2.2 is a planetarium program. It displays the heavens from any location on earth. Viewing options let you control sky objects to display and the font to use, and you can manipulate various star parameters. You can set the time to run at multiple speeds, including backwards. Star charts may be printed.

Version 2.2's features include:
○ Mouse zooming and other UI enhancements.
○ Star names
○ Object find for constellations, stars, deep sky objects, and solar system objects
○ Altitude range extended.

Night Vision is available at BMT Micro. The program's home page is

http://home.att.net/
~bsimpson/nvsn.html

PU Monitor

PU Monitor is a general purpose system monitoring tool for OS/2. PU Monitor keeps track of CPU usage, TCP/IP traffic, available memory, uptime, and a POP3 mailbox. A connection monitor has no screen presentation, and can be used as custom version of ping, informing you if a site connection is lost.

PU Monitor 2.0 is completely rewritten, uses multithreaded design to gather information, and has buffered drawing for a smooth and flicker free look. It has a greatly improved user interface, support for many graph types, settings notebook, and many smaller improvements.

The WPS is not required; PU Monitor works with Filebar, Mshell, or PC/2 in PS replacement modes.

Registration: $30. Available at BMT Micro.

GhostFax version 1.0

GhostFax 1.0 is a set of three small programs. In conjunction with Fax-Works, GhostScript, and Printmon, GhostFax lets you send faxes to a fax number inside documents rather than filling in FaxWorks' Send dialog box.

You'll find the file as GhFax-1.ZIP at www.leo.org. For more information, contact Jens.Jakob.Schiffler@student.uni-augsburg.de.

Apache 1.3.1

The free Apache 1.3.1 Web server has been released. An OS/2 port is available at www.apache.org/dist/binaries/os2/apache_1.3.1-os2.zip.

Bubblepad 1.0

Chris Wohlgemuth wrote an enhancement to the Launchpad for OS/2 Warp 3 and above. Bubblepad provides button flyover help and reduces the pad size by reordering the buttons. The utility consists of a replacement class and fits seamlessly into the WPS. Full online help is

provided. NLS for English and German. The program is released under the GPL, so full source code is included. You need the EMX runtime libs for the installation program.

Find Bubblepad at www.geocities.com/SiliconValley/Sector/5785/bubblepd.htm or contact the author at chris.wohlgemuth@cityweb.de.

PGP 5.0

William H. Geiger III released PGP 5.0. Both an international version and a US version (compiled with RSAREF lib) are available.

You can find a copy of the software at www.openpgp.net. The author reports that he's now turning his attention to writing an OpenPGP Toolkit and more OpenPGP goodies.

Simple Desktop for Java

At www.kiss.uni-lj.si/~k4fe0320 you can find Simple Desktop for Java v1.1, an Intranet PIM set of desktop utilities like a planner, phone book, scratchbook, calculator, scheduler, chat module, simple database browser, and minesweeper.

You need OS/2 Warp Server, TCP/IP, and Web server. On the client side you need a Java 1.1 capable browser.

Minta 1.45

Minta is useful if you work frequently with MP3 audio files. Apart from displaying technical information about the files, you can create, edit, and remove ID3 info tags.

Minta's listing function lets you output the files with selectable information very easily. To learn more, visit www.informatik.uni-trier.de/CIP/thielen/minta.

Listen 306 1.1

Listen 306 is an ISDN watcher tool for Eumex and AGFEO ISDN communication machines, including Eumex 306.

This easy-to-use native OS/2 software provides support for

COM1-4 serial devices, and up to nine ISDN devices. It has listed and detailed log view for all connect information, powerful printing features (including preview), multi-threading, and a German UI.

A demonstration version can be downloaded from `www.hamburg.roses.de/~carsten.mueller`.

News Harvest

News Harvest is an OS/2 PM application to automatically retrieve Usenet News binary articles.

The main design impetus was to create a File and Forget utility that would process any number of groups over any number of servers with no user intervention. Once configured with host and group information, a single command runs the process to completion.

A binary news harvester with such simplicity of operation is often low on features. This isn't the case with News Harvest:

- Multithreaded, fully 32-bit executable.
- Completely automatic operation.
- Rebuilds multipart articles.
- Remembers past downloads.
- Utilizes spam-keyword filtering.
- Fully configurable output paths.
- Handles abrupt disconnections (reconnects).
- Updates Netscape Navigator news file (optional).
- Very low to average CPU load.
- Comprehensive logging information (optional).
- WPS drag and drop.
- Output displayed in ordered and intuitive manner.
- On-the-fly configuration changes.
- Complete online manual.

Registration: $24. Available at BMT Micro.

X-IT 2.51

X-it gives a single click interface to many common actions that normally require a large number of mouse movements and clicking. X-it was nominated as Most Innovative New Product at the 1997 Shareware Industry Awards (`www.sic.org`).

Features new to version 2.51 include:

- Rollup/down all windows
- Various fixes
- A new port: X-it for Windows 95/98/3.x.

WarpGLOBE

I don't ordinarily mention beta software in this column, but this one sounds like fun—and you can contribute to the project.

WarpGLOBE makes an earth globe your desktop background, and paints dark and light zones according to the sun's position. It also shows a red point in cities where an OS/2 user lives. To download the beta and/or to participate by sending your city, visit `www.arrakis.es/~scostas/OS2/globeeng.htm` or (in Spanish) `www.arrakis.es/~scostas/OS2/globe.htm`. Contact Sergio Costas Rodriguez, `scostas@arrakis.es`.

Gismo 2.1

Gismo is a utility to help choose colors for HTML pages. You can download it from: `www.asahi-net.or.jp/~qw6k-knst/software/software.htm`

It is also available from `http://users.powernet.co.uk/vpub` in the local download directory, where you will also find a a macro to launch Gismo (and `kHTepm14.zip`) from the EPM editor (with instructions and warnings in the same directory), along with other EPM macros.

MAME for OS/2

MAME stands for Multiple Arcade Machine Emulator, and currently runs 500+ classic (and even some not-so-classic) arcade games such as BombJack, 1943, and Bubble Bobble. An OS/2 port was just released.

The port was done by Martin Amodeo, and the project is a part of the OS/2 Netlabs. To get more information, visit OS/2 Netlabs at `www.netlabs.org/projects/mame.html`.

Hopkins: FBI

PolyEx Software has completed its new game, Hopkins: FBI. For more information, see PolyEx's Web site at `www.polyex.com`.

FM/2 3.0

File Manager/2 3.0 (FM/2) is a shareware OS/2 Warp PM 32-bit file/directory/archive maintenance utility. It's a sort of super-Drives object, midway between the Drives objects and a more traditional file

manager. FM/2 has plenty of bells, whistles, and utilities, drag and drop, context menus, toolbars, bubble help and accelerator keys. If you know how to use OS/2, you already know how to use most of FM/2. You can easily glean the rest from the extensive online help, including tutorials.

Version 3.0 has a lot of changes. Here's just a subset.

- The status button in Directory Containers that shows the selected number of files and bytes now displays a select menu when clicked.
- Drive buttons show free space on drives as bubble help, except for CD-ROM drives, diskette drives A: and B:, and drives marked as "slow" in the drive flags dialog. The buttons are a little bigger, and will "stack" if required due to insufficient width.
- You can add selected environment variables that list directories (like PATH, LIBPATH and DPATH) to the Drive Tree with a toggle in the internal Settings notebook on the Tree page. Cool.
- You can set a default Target directory for menu and accelerator key copy and move operations, and choose to confirm (and perhaps change) that directory on each operation, or accept it without confirmation.

Registration: $40. Available at BMT Micro.

BootSet

BootSet allow batch command files to run during the OS/2 boot-sequence. BootSet is normally run before the graphic part of OS/2 (PM/WPS) is loaded, so it allows you to perform tasks that aren't possible when PM/WPS is loaded, such as replacing system files such as DLL files, drivers, and config.sys.

Optionally, you can use BootSet to select different startup configurations using the reboot feature of BootSet.

BootSet can support the smallest OS/2 configurations. You do not need WPS nor PM to install/modify/run BootSet. BootSet might not be a flashy PM program but does its job, with very little system resources.

Registration: $15. Available at BMT Micro.

Tunnel/2 1.2

If you are not yet up to speed on Virtual Private Networks (and how one can save your business big money in communications costs), drop Web site for a quick look, at `www.fx.dk/tunnel`.

Tunnel/2 1.2 improvements include:

○ Improved TCP/IP v4.1 support
○ Security uses military grade encryption plugin
○ Compression: Time proven algorithm plugin
○ Packet Filtering: Full filtering capable plugin
○ Optional separate routing for Tunnel and Web traffic
○ Documentation and Web-site refreshed
○ Mail list introduced

BarCode Anywhere for OS/2

Solution Technology has qualified its high performance BarCode Anywhere for OS/2 input filters under ImagePlus VisualInfo Version 2.3.1 as well as the ImagePlus Workstation Program Version 2.1.0. Previously, BarCode Anywhere was qualified under the ImagePlus Workstation Program Version 1.2.x.

BarCode Anywhere is the first product to achieve a scan and read rate of over two pages per second without special hardware. It continues to be the fastest all angles software barcode image reader in the industry.

Solution Technology is a leading supplier of components for image analysis, data-entry, document management applications, and device driver development. Other barcode, forms reading, image data-entry, and departmental management products for OS/2 and Windows NT are available for use in the transportation, banking, distribution, and insurance industries among others.

For more information, visit `www.gate.net/~stidev`.

Zydacron videoconferencing

Zydacron's OnWAN250 for OS/2, release 2 and ZDK for OS/2, release 2 is now available. Zydacron is a manufacturer of commercial videoconferencing software and hardware for ISDN and Ethernet.

OnWAN is the third generation desktop videoconferencing system from Zydacron. Great video and great audio made Zydacron an OEM leader; now OnWAN for OS/2 provides a complete end user package that solves the real problems of desktop videoconferencing in the OS/2 operating system.

OnWAN is fast and easy to install: a single ISA board, single interrupt, integrated ISDN analyzer, and a video overlay that works with any VGA controller card, using no internal cables.

If you have ever struggled with a first or second generation videoconferencing product, you will know in half an hour that OnWAN is a breakthrough in simplicity, flexibility, quality and value. If you are new to the videoconferencing experience, you'll be glad you started with Zydacron. You'll find more information at `www.zydacron.com /mainsite/onwan250os2.htm`.

Electronic Teller updated

Electronic Teller is an affordable financial package geared to the home user. Among its many features are an attractive user interface which helps you handle bank, credit card, cash, asset, and liability accounts, all grouped within portfolios. Multiple-user support shields accounts from one another. Persistent transaction links between accounts in one portfolio, or transfers from an account in one portfolio to an account in a second portfolio. Reminders can be created with limited or perpetual repetitions. And so on.

Version 3.11 includes:

○ Links are included in category graphs, and are displayed according to their type. For instance, a link to a credit card is considered an expense, because the account itself is a liability.
○ Linking via drag and drop no longer links to an existing transaction, ensuring complete data integrity for QIF exports and imports.
○ Accounts now support a second interest rate and a minimum balance required value for balance forecasts. If the minimum balance is met or exceeded, the second interest rate will be applied;

otherwise, the first interest rate is used in the tabulation.

○ A pie chart was added to category graphs to get overview of inflows versus outflows for either the entire year that has been plotted or for individual months (in category graphs).
○ ...and plenty more.

Registration is $40. Electronic Teller is available at BMT Micro.

ISIS Papyrus

The ISIS Papyrus Document System (PDS) redefines the state-of-the-art of business document automation and management for large corporations.
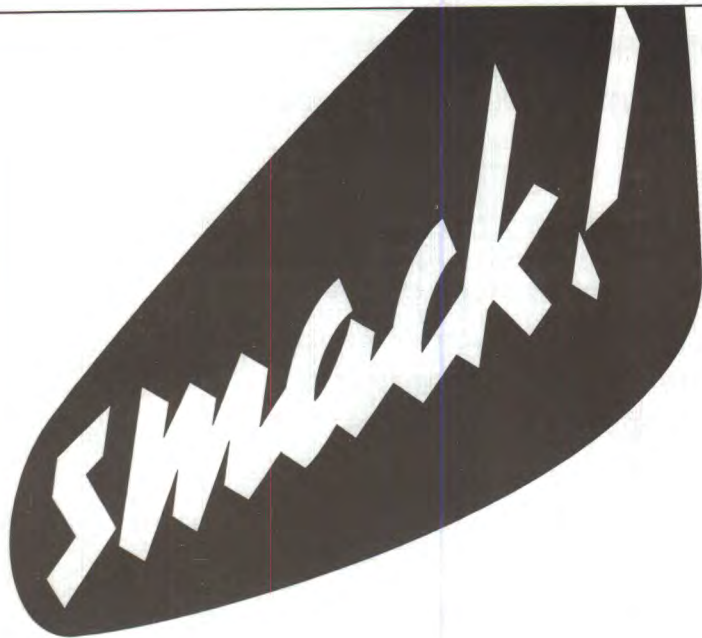
Using well accepted architectures and standards, the PDS provides a unified solution for development, production, and management of business documents. Full support for all Middle East and Asia Pacific languages and codepages is provided as standard. Completely printer and operating system independent, Papyrus provides substantial reduction in total effort and cost related to business documents and offers a return of investment in less than two years. ISIS also offers the most successful application design tools for IBM AFP compatible printing with full OGL/PPFA language compatibility.

ISIS Papyrus Solutions are available for OS/390, AIX, HP/UX, Solaris, Digital UNIX, OS/2, NT, and Windows 95/98 and supports all industry standard printer languages and interfaces. Intra/Internet integration is provided by use of JAVA.

From the designer workstation, to the PC client, to the powerful processing, workflow, print, and output management features, Papyrus delivers a unique and visionary, completely integrated software architecture capable of producing and managing high volumes, just as client based production of personalized business documents down to the representatives notebook PC.

ISIS Papyrus is the leading supplier of corporate business document solutions in Europe and Asia Pacific.

For more information, visit `www.isis-papyrus.com`. ◔

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